

Message Text

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ORIGIN COME-00

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 ISO-00 EB-07 DOTE-00 RSC-01 H-01 /014 R

DRAFTED BY COM/OED/MEPD/JLSMITH/MJJ

APPROVED BY EB/OCA/REP:BEBYRON

COM/OED/MEPD/J.M.SANDS, DIR.

COM/BIC/OIM/R.RYDLUN (INFO)

STATE/AF/W-H.WALKER

STATE/DOT/TPIARE/DZOBELL (INFO)

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P 241833Z DEC 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, NI

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: RAILROAD DEVELOPMENT: NZEGWU
VISIT

REF: LAGOS 11589

1. WE AGREE THAT INVITATION FOR NZEGWU TO VISIT U.S. FOR
TOUR OF RAILROADS, MANUFACTURERS, AND PROJECTS COULD BE
MOST USEFUL IN SUPPORTING INDUSTRY EFFORTS OBTAIN BUSINESS
IN NIGERIA AND, AT LEAST, MATCH INTEREST DEMONSTRATED BY
JAPAN, UK, FRANCE, AND ITALY.

2. THERE ARE SEVERAL PROBLEMS THAT WILL BE ENCOUNTERED
WITH APPROACH WHICH EMBASSY SUGGESTS-THAT PRIVATE INDUSTRY
PICK UP TAB. FIRST, SEVERAL COMPANIES ARE OR WILL BE
COMPETING AGAINST EACH OTHER FOR CONTRACTS. IF THEY ARE
WILLING PROVIDE FUNDS, THEY WILL CERTAINLY FEEL THEY HAVE
A PROPRIETARY INTEREST IN NZEGWU'S TIME AND SCHEDULE.
GETTING THEM TO COOPERATE ON THIS POINT WILL BE RATHER
DIFFICULT. SECOND, NOT ALL COMPETITORS HAVE SAME
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RESOURCES FOR HOSPITALITY. PULLMAN, GM, OR GE COULD

EASILY PAY FOR ENTIRE TRIP. THIS MAY NOT BE THE CASE WITH SMALLER CONSULTANTS AND ENGINEERS WHO LACK THE CAPITAL OF MAJOR MANUFACTURERS. THIRD, TIMING IS A FACTOR. IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE COMPANY (OR FOREIGN GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED CONSORTIUM) THAT WINS THE CONSULTANCY CONTRACT, THE PROFITABLE DOWN-STREAM BUSINESS. WHILE A COMPANY MIGHT BE WILLING PAY FOR VISIT NOW, HOPING TO SUPPORT ITS BIDDING EFFORT, THIS MAY NOT BE THE CASE IF THE TRIP IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE AND IF BY THEN A THIRD COUNTRY COMPETITOR HAS ALREADY OBTAINED THE CONSULTANCY CONTRACT. FINALLY, AN INVITATION FROM INDUSTRY MAY CREATE A DIFFERENT AND PERHAPS LESS FAVORABLE IMPRESSION THAN ONE FROM THE USG. IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE RAILROADS IN THE UK, JAPAN, FRANCE, AND ITALY ARE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. WHILE WE DO NOT KNOW HOW THE COUNTRIES EXTENDED INVITATIONS TO NZEWGU, THEY WERE, IN FACT, OFFICIAL.

3. FOR THE FOREGOING REASONS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S OPINION ON WHETHER A "LEADERSHIP GRANT" INVITATION MIGHT MEET WITH A DIFFERENT RESPONSE THAN IT RECEIVED DURING 1970. IF NZEGWU WERE FLOWN TO THIS COUNTRY UNDER GOVERNMENT AUSPICES, IT WOULD THEN BE EASY TO ARRANGE FOR VARIOUS FIRMS TO FLY HIM AROUND THE COUNTRY AND ACCOMODATE HIM AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE DURING MOST OF HIS VISIT. IN ANY CASE, THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM WITH A RECEPTION ALONG THE LINES SUGGESTED IN PARA FOUR OF REFTEL.

4. IF AN OFFICIAL INVITATION IS STILL OUT OF THE QUESTION, MEPD WILL GO AHEAD WITH AN EFFORT TO ARRANGE AN INDUSTRY FUNDED VISIT OF SOME KIND. AN EARLY RESPONSE WOULD BE APPRECIATED SINCE CRUCIAL FACTOR WILL BE EXTENSION OF INVITATION BEFORE DECISION IS MADE ON CONSULTANCY CONTRACT. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE281027
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: OED/MEPD/JLSMITH/MJJ
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740374-0115
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741212/aaaaajlq.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN COME
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 LAGOS 11589
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2002 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <19 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAJOR PROJECT: RAILROAD DEVELOPMENT: NZEGWU VISIT
TAGS: BEXP, NI
To: LAGOS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005